THE BUTTER MAKERS' RESPONSIBILITIES DURING THE YEARS OF THE WAR

ALLAN CARSWELL

"The responsibilities placed upon the butter makers during the years of the Great World War have been almost without number and they have carried them successfully through the long dreary years, the younger men, by a large percentage of them joining the Army and Navy, crossing the seas and doing their bit to make this old world a better place to live in.

"The calling of the younger men to the service of their country worked considerable hardship for it has been almost impossible to procure experienced helpers during the last two years and unskilled help commanded wages that were equal to what many butter makers were receiving in many of the smaller creameries of the State.

"What the above condition meant to men who were operating creameries for a fixed salary, they to furnish all necessary help
is well illustrated by the case of a creamery in the Northern part of the State, this creamery makes about 250,000 lbs. of butter a year and pays a salary of $1800 per year, this butter maker had a helper for six months at $75.00 per month and in September on his helper being called to the army he commenced to do all the work alone, making 75 tubs of butter a week, receiving cream daily, also testing same daily, and pasteurizing same. That it is possible for a man to do justice either to himself or employers under such circumstances is impossible yet he was forced to get along without any assistance if he was to have a living wage left for himself and family.

"The need of an immense amount of butter for the Navy, the personnel of which had more than quadrupled in the first few months after we entered the war, made it necessary in the Spring of 1918 to call on the creameries to volunteer to make butter that would comply with the rigid specifications required by the Navy. In the Middle West, Minnesota made the best showing in the amount of butter furnished but we have a small creamery section up in Polk County that furnished some 463,000 pounds and the butter makers who made this butter are as follows: Peter Kristensen, Cushing Creamery, B. J. Lindvig, Milltown Creamery, Chris. Back, Luck Creamery, Elmer Erickson, Bone Lake, Creamery, I. S. Larson of the Eureka Creamery, Wood River Creamery and the Atlas Creamery. These men demonstrated that it is possible, (where farmers have the real cooperative spirit) to make butter from hand separator cream that will come up to the most exacting requirements, and the experience and profit they and their creameries have gained cannot be measured in mere dollars and cents.

"The question might be asked why it is that only five creameries in the great Dairy State of Wisconsin answered the call to make butter for the Navy and at the conclusion of this short address we should like to have a little discussion on this question.

"The high cost of all creamery supplies and the difficulty of obtaining many of them at any price, the Government regulations on coal ammonia, together with the demoralized conditions of the service rendered by the railroads in carrying the butter to the large distributing centers and delivering much needed supplies to the creameries were all contributing causes for much extra work and worry.
"Competition with cheese and condensed milk have caused the closing of many small creameries and have also kept a good many butter makers awake nights figuring how they were going to meet the prices and keep their patrons in the face of this new competition, however, the creamery business in line with every other industry is fast getting back to a pre war basis and I am confident that it will in the future as in the past more than hold its own against all competitors.

"The last but most important responsibility of the butter maker personnel has been that of feeding and clothing his family during three years of war prices, during which time food products have been 50% to 85% above normal prices and clothing has been up to 100% higher, and he has had to do this on a salary that with very few exceptions has not been increased and we have been practically the only class of men in the dairy industry that failed to get their wages increased. The fact that the butter makers stuck by their creameries when they could have made more money by entering other lines of war work showed that they were loyal to the industry, it also illustrates the fact our organization is not fitted as organized at present to be of any particular benefit and the sooner it is remodeled into a real working association that will protect its members and place the trade of creamery operating on the plane where it belongs the better it will be for the whole creamery industry."

Mr. Carswell: My object in reading this paper, if I were going to continue in my present position I probably would not have said something already said and may not something that I might say, because as you all know, it is natural in men to be more or less selfish and we are all more or less selfish. I want to thank you at this time for the honor that you have given me in the past. There are very few conventions that I have missed since it started in Milwaukee and you all know years ago I tried to start something along this same line. That is one reason today, gentlemen, that Minnesota was able to come across when the time came and the country needed the butter for the Navy. They were there with the goods and had the butter to deliver. They also had the men in their business that are loyal to their country. Now somebody will say, here Carswell is knocking Wisconsin. Wisconsin is the state where I have made my bread and butter for the last eight years and brought up my family and I have lots of respect for the good old State of Wisconsin, but
don't let us be too selfish and just think that Wisconsin is all, and Minnesota and these other states don't amount to anything, just because we make more butter and cheese in Wisconsin. If we can learn anything from these other states, if they have pointed out the way right over there in Minnesota that the butter makers must form an association that will be a real association let us do so. We have all got to work together to a common end. My interests will not be quite with you any more, my interest to a certain point will be identical but there are certain conditions there that my interests and your interests as men working in the creamery will not be identical if I should buy a little creamery of my own.

They have good things they want to talk over and have an organization to protect them in every particular section of this creamery business and the cooperative men have their organization and they are all working to a common end but you have got to have your own organization. We can all meet together but the sooner we come to the idea that each organization works for itself because we have ideas and interests that are common to one. But what is beneficial to the one section in the creamery industry may not be so to the other section and there are conflicting ideas there that you can work out. But if each section of this industry gets together to work out their own salvation we will all come out a good deal better in the end for it. I want to say in conclusion, I did this to start something and I am not going to have much more to say.

**DISCUSSION.**

**Mr. Colwell:** I think Mr. Carswell's idea is that the butter makers haven't received an increase in salary in proportion to what the farmer has received for his cream, I think that is the idea of Mr. Carswell.

**Mr. Carswell:** That is my idea, Mr. Colwell. The increase in the price of cream that the farmer has received before the war and now has been around fifty per cent. For instance, five years ago the average creamery report shows the average price for butter fat was from thirty-two to thirty-five cents a pound. This year many reports show that they are running from fifty to fifty-five cents a pound and that is about fifty per cent. I think I can agree with Mr. Colwell that the
butter makers have not had an increase in wages for the last four years, while the farmer has.

Mr. Lee: A young man in Wisconsin walked in my office about Christmas time and he said: "My salary as a butter maker in a cooperative creamery in Wisconsin for the month of November paid $232.00, and some cents."

Member: He has nothing to kick about. That man, Mr. Lee, spoke of receiving $200.00, is an exception, there are some men in some professions that are made to rise clear above their fellows. You have got to work out your own salvation; the farmers aren't going to work it out for you. You have to study your own condition and you have got to be the salesman and sell your own services at the highest price, the same as butter.

Mr. Spiers: Mr. Carswell has started something that I think is along the right line. I think I know what I am talking about and the trouble with the butter makers is with themselves. You all know you get located in a creamery. You get to doing good work and you will get a fair salary. There is some new man who wants your job at less money and the butter maker asks for more salary from his board of directors and somebody there thinks the helper can do the job and do it for less money. Now I would like to see a close knit organization of the butter makers, formed in this state. I am an employer of butter makers, it would be of benefit to me. I have long contended that the butter making industry should have such an organization. I have thought and I believe I helped start the licensing in this state because I thought it would give us better butter makers. It would protect the old experienced butter makers against the help that they think can make butter. I would like to see the creamery business and butter makers graded as school-teachers are and paid according to their grade, and I think Mr. Carswell has started something right along the right line.

Mr. Morrison: I am sorry that I could not take in all of Mr. Carswell's paper, it is not Mr. Carswell's fault, but my head is in such condition that I couldn't hear. I am satisfied it is along the right line because we have talked these things over a number of times and I have always contended that this should be a butter makers' convention more in the true sense of the word more than in just simply in name only.

I want to take up a few minutes more of your time, I want to take this opportunity of expressing my thanks as Mr. Cars-
well did to the members of the Wisconsin Butter Makers' Association for the confidence they have reposed in me to elect me three successive years to the office of president. I want to say further that I can't any more class myself as a butter maker. I am in the same condition as Mr. Carswell, as a citizen of the State of Wisconsin, the greatest dairy state in the union, I shall always have a deep interest in the creamery as well as the welfare of the butter makers and I shall always consider it a pleasure to be at your meetings. If you should organize so as to exclude me from membership I should like to come certainly as an interested spectator.

MR. BENKENDORF: Since Mr. Glover spoke yesterday there has been considerable interest in the Wisconsin Dairy Council. We are informed that Mr. McCarthy of Chicago, who purchased the exhibition butter for 42c a pound has resold the butter to Mr. Speirs of the Eau Claire Creamery Co., for 43c, and that he will not take any profit personally but will allow the Butter Makers' Association to profit to that extent. I understand that Mr. Keppel has a motion that he would like to present at this time.

MR. KEPPEL: I have been very much interested in the Wisconsin Dairy Council and believe that it is a good thing to push along. After consulting several members of the association I am ready to make the following motion: "That the amount of the proceeds received from the sale of this exhibition butter to the Eau Claire Creamery Company at the rate of 43c per pound be turned over or donated to the Wisconsin Dairy Council and that the creamery managers or creamery companies of the members exhibiting the butter be asked to donate the $10 due them from the premium fund; it being understood that if the creamery company does not care to do so and will ask the butter maker to pay for the tub of butter then the butter maker be given the $10 as per agreement announced in the program.

This motion was seconded.

MR. SPEIRS: "I may say that it will be a pleasure for me to help the Wisconsin Dairy Council along in every way possible. I also want to say that if I make any money on the sale of the butter above the 43c that I will cheerfully donate this amount to the Wisconsin Dairy Council."

MR. BENKENDORF: "There is just one point that I want to speak about and that is that there ought to be a time limit placed
on the time that we expect the butter makers to notify us in case the creamery companies do not care to contribute or are not able to contribute. If a time limit is not placed some member, next July, will come along and say he wants that $10 and we may have turned it over to the Council. I therefore think that we ought to place a time limit at March 1st so that if any butter maker cannot convince his manager that he ought to contribute the butter to the Wisconsin Dairy Council that the butter maker will get the $10 which he is entitled to."

MR. KEPPEL: "I will modify my motion to that extent because I feel that it ought to have a time limit."

The motion was then restated and carried unanimously.

MR. MORRISON: We have a little more business, if the committee is ready to report we will hear the Resolution Committee.

(Mr. Robert Carswell on the Resolution Committee read the following resolution.)

RESOLVED, that we appreciate highly the many courtesies extended to us by the Civic & Commerce Association, and the citizens of Eau Claire in their efforts to make our stay during this convention agreeable, and the thanks of this association is hereby tendered to them in recognition of their efforts.

We appreciate the hospitality of the Elks in opening to us their club house and in giving us an entertainment, and we hereby tender our thanks to them for their good fellowship and hospitality.

WHEREAS, the Eau Claire Creamery Company has given the use of their cold storage facilities for the care of the butter exhibit, and in many other ways, have done what they could to make this convention a success. Therefore, be it resolved that the thanks of this association are due and are hereby tendered to the Eau Claire Creamery Company.

WHEREAS, it is a matter of regret, that our president, Mr. Morrison, has been unable to be with us during the sessions so far, and it is the hope of the association that he will speedily recover his health, and that his presence with us this morning, will not endanger the same; as an association, we appreciate his services as president.

The Wisconsin Butter Makers' Association has a reputation for holding successful conventions, and the present convention is no exception to the rule. We hereby tender our thanks to the